

Get Moving This Holiday Season!

Tips for staying active during winter and the holidays



Exercising is critical for your health, your energy level and your sanity. In fact, taking the time to exercise is one of the best things you can do to make the holidays go smoother and your celebrations happier.

Studies show that 30 minutes of exercise a day most days of the week will help prevent heart disease and improve your health. Make time in your schedule for 30 minutes of exercise each day and you will greet the New Year with energy and fitness to spare.

Here are some tips to help you stay active this holiday season:

Make physical activity part of your day

- Make every movement count.
- Do household chores at a pace fast enough to get your heart pumping.
- Park further away from the door when running errands.
- Always use the stairs.
- Be prepared to be active; wear comfortable shoes.
- Do extra laps at the mall to window shop when shopping for gifts.
- Make watching TV active: stretch or use hand weights during the commercials.

Exercise safely in the cold

- If you have health concerns, check with your doctor to make sure it's safe for you to exercise in the cold.
- Dress in layers. Your first layer should be thin and a polypropylene material that draws sweat away from your body. The next layer is for insulation — try fleece. The outer layer should be waterproof and breathable.
- Warm the air. Wear a scarf, bandana or face mask over your mouth when it is very cold.
- Wear a hat or headband to avoid the large amount of heat lost through your head.
- Exercise during the day when there is good visibility and you can avoid ice.
- Drink fluids. It is still possible to get dehydrated in the winter, so be sure to drink plenty of fluids.

Be active with a buddy

- Exercise with a friend — it makes it more fun and helps you stay accountable. You are more likely to be physically active when you know someone else is counting on you.
- Surround yourself with people who support you in your effort to stay active this winter.
- Get your family involved and play outside with your kids.

Add physical activity to your holiday traditions

- Sign up for a race or an event. New Ulm will be holding the Jingle Bell Jam, a four-mile walk/run on Saturday, December 12.
- When you tour your neighborhood lights, leave the car at home. Bundle up and walk instead.
- Try a new sport like snowshoeing, cross-country skiing or broom hockey. If you don't like the snow, try indoor ice skating. Visit Flandrau State Park for options on snowshoeing or cross-country skiing.
- If you are at a holiday party, hit the dance floor!